

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM USLO PEKING

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AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 0871

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJ: MAY DAY 1977 IN PEKING: THE LEADERSHIP AND OTHER LOCAL  
COLOR

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. PEKING'S LEADERS AND MASSES CELEBRATED  
MAY DAY 1977 IN RELAXED FASHION, REVERTING TO OBSERVANCES  
TYPICAL OF PRE-1976 NORMALCY. HUA KUO-FENG AND OTHER  
NATIONAL LEADERS TURNED OUT IN PEKING'S PARKS AND AT  
AN EVENING SPORTS EVENT AND FIREWORKS DISPLAY. THE  
TURNOUTS INVOLVED SOME MILD SURPRISES--NOTABLY THE PRESENCE  
IN PEKING OF SEVERAL LEADERS NORMALLY ROOTED IN THEIR  
PROVINCIAL BAIWICKS--BUT NO REVELATIONS SAVE VISUAL  
CONFIRMATION THAT YEH CHIEN-YING IS PROBABLY FEELING HIS  
AGE. END SUMMARY.

2. PEKING'S LEADERS AND MASSES CELEBRATED MAY DAY IN  
RELAXED FASHION, REVERTING TO OBSERVANCES TYPICAL OF  
PRE-1976 NORMALCY. FOREIGNERS AND PRIVILEGED CHINESE  
WERE ADMITTED MORNING AND EVENING BY SPECIAL PASS TO  
PEKING'S SIX MAJOR PARKS, WHICH FEATURED ELABORATE  
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FLORAL DISPLAYS, PAPIER-MACHE REPLICAS OF CHAFA'S  
MODEL UNITS IN AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY, FOOD AND  
TOY COUNTERS, PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AND PENNY-ARCADE-  
TYPE AMUSEMENTS FOR CHILDREN, VARIETY THEATRICAL  
PERFORMANCES, CHESS-PLAYING STALLS, AND BOOKSTANDS  
WHERE THE POLITICALLY CONSCIOUS AND THE SOUVENIR  
HUNGRY MIGHT PURCHASE A COPY OF MAO'S VOLUME FIVE OR

A COMPILATION OF ARTICLES COMMEMORATING CHOU EN-LAI.  
(ADDRESSEES WILL HAVE SEEN NCNA'S RATHER FLORID BUT  
GENERALLY ACCURATE ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS.)

3. AN IDEALIZED PAINTING OF CHAIRMAN MAO'S BENEDICTORY  
"WITH YOU IN CHARGE I'M AT EASE" MESSAGE TO HUA DOMI-  
NATED THE CENTRAL AREA OF EACH PARK. WITH CONSIDERABLE  
ARTISTIC LICENSE THE SCENE DEPICTS A FULLY ALERT AND  
BENEVOLENT MAO, HAND RESTING PATERNALLY ATOP THE  
HAND OF A RAPTLY ATTENTIVE HUA. NCNA REPORTAGE NOT-  
WITHSTANDING ("IT ATTRACTED LARGE CROWDS WHO HAD  
THEIR PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BEFORE IT"), USLO OFFICERS  
WITNESSED LITTLE PUBLIC REACTION OR ATTENTION TO THE  
PAINTING, BY NOW A FAMILIAR FEATURE OF FACTORY AND  
GOVERNMENT OFFICE TEA-AND-BRIEFING ROOMS.

4. HUA KUO-FENG, THE PRC'S FIRST PARK-STROLLING  
PARTY CHAIRMAN IN MEMORY, TURNED OUT AT CHUNG SHAN  
(SUN YAT-SEN) PARK AT 3 PM SHARP TO WITNESS A MUSICAL  
PERFORMANCE, WITH HUA WERE "ESTEEMED AND  
BELOVED" PARTY VICE CHAIRMAN YEH CHIEN-YING, WHO HAD  
EMERGED FROM TWO MONTHS OF INVISIBILITY ON APRIL 29  
TO MEET AND EAT WITH BURMESE PRESIDENT NE WIN; RANKING  
VICE PREMIER LI HSIEN-NIEN; THE ONCE-SHADOWY BUT  
RECENTLY PROMINENT SECURITY BOSS AND POLITBURO MEMBER  
WANG TUN-HSING; AND CHOU EN-LAI'S WIDOW TENG YING-CHAO.  
HUA AND YEH ESCORTED PRESIDENT AND MME NE WIN INTO  
THE MUSIC HALL.

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5. ALL ACTIVE POLITBURO MEMBERS SAVE HSU SHIH-YU AND  
WEI KUO-CHING, WHO PARTICIPATED IN CANTON MAY DAY  
DELEBRATIONS, TURNED OUT AT PEKING PARKS. INEXPLICABLY  
AWAY FROM THEIR REGIONAL BAILIWICKS AND IN  
PEKING WERE SHENYANG MILITARY REGION COMMANDER LI TEH-  
SHENG; THE REPORTEDLY AILING AND LONG OUT OF SIGHT  
SINKIANG PARTY BOSS SAIFUDIN; AND SHANGHAI'S FIRST  
AND SECOND PARTY SECRETARIES SU CHEN-HUA AND NI CHIH-  
FU, BOTH POLITBURO ALTERNATES.

6. IN THE EVENING HUA, YEH, AND AN ARRAY OF OTHER  
LEADERS ATTENDED A SOCCER GAME AND FIREWORKS DISPLAY  
AT THE WORKER'S STADIUM. WITH THEM WERE A WHO'S WHO  
OF IMPORTANT ARJEIGNERS VISITING AND RESIDENT IN  
PEKING: PRESIDENT AND MME NE WIN; MME LUCETTE  
CABRAL, WIFE OF GUINEA-BUSSAU'S PRESIDENT LUIS  
CABRAL; INDONESIA COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBER JUSUF  
ADJITOROP; AND SUNDRY KOREANS, ROMANIANS, AND JAPANESE.  
DIPLOMATIC AND OTHER MEMBERS OF PEKING'S FOREIGN

COMMUNITY ALSO RECEIVED GRATIS TICKETS TO ATTEND THE FESTIVITIES.

7. LIVE TELEVISION COVERAGE OF THE AFTERNOON AND EVENING LEADERSHIP APPEARANCES YIELDED NO MEANINGFUL POLITICAL INSIGHTS. THE CAMERA CAPTURED AN ALERT BUT APPARENTLY INFIRM YEH CHIEN-YING, SUPPORTED BY ATTENDANTS ON EITHER SIDE.

8. COMMENT: THE POLITICAL POINT OF SUCH ORCHESTRATED LEADERSHIP APPEARANCES, OF COURSE, IS TO ESTABLISH VISUAL EVIDENCE OF NORMALCY, UNITY, AND INTIMATE LINKS WITH THE MASSES. IN THIS SENSE MAY DAY 1977 IN PEKING WAS A GOOD SHOW. BUT CRYSTAL-BALL-GAZING BASED ON SUCH TURNOUTS IS NOTORIOUSLY HAZARDOUS; LAST MAY DAY THE TOP SIX LEADERS STANDING IN SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER SOLIDARITY AT SUN YAT-SEN PARK WERE HUA  
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KUO-FENG, YEH CHIEN-YING, CHIANG CHING, YAO WEN-YUAN, LI HSIEN-NIEN, AND CHEN HSI-LIEN. TWO ARE NOW REVEILED AS CHARTER MEMBERS OF THE "GANG OF FOUR." AND THE REMAINING FOUR, WE SUSPECT, MAY BE SERIOUSLY DIVIDED OVER THE ISSUE OF TENG HSIAO-PING AND THE NATURE OF POST-MAO LEADERSHIP.  
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## Message Attributes

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